

~~TOP SECRET~~

TS #142045 (A)

24 February 1960

OUTLINE OF STATEMENT FOR THE JOHNSON COMMITTEE

Much of the discussion with regard to the missile ^{Situation} ~~race~~ has turned upon the comparison of intelligence estimates as finalized a little over a year ago and those which the intelligence community has produced this year.

It goes without saying that we believe that our latest estimates are the best available. They are based upon new and valuable intelligence gained over the past 12 months as well as the growing sophistication of our knowledge in the field of ballistic missiles and space vehicles.

Old estimates may be useful to judge of trends and of the improvement of our intelligence, not as a basis for present policy.

However, I wish to clear up any questions in your mind with regard to basic findings of last year's estimate as contrasted with those of the new estimate.

To do this I should like to begin by pointing out four particulars, in addition to the question of numbers, in which this year's estimate differs from that of last year:

~~TOP SECRET~~

First, in last year's estimate we projected the possibility of a Soviet "crash" program for the production and deployment of ICBMs (overriding priority and exceptional success). We also projected a program which was not of a crash nature. We could not then (December 1958) confidently choose between the two. But in September 1959, after careful consideration of the Soviet testing program and of other elements which we felt were applicable, and after consultation with experts outside of the intelligence community, we concluded that a crash program was not involved. This conclusion was reaffirmed in this year's estimate.

Second, our analysis has convinced us that it is the number ^{on launcher -- including the missile} of missiles plus launcher and operation crew that is most meaningful -- not solely the number of missiles in operational inventory. Previously our analysts had been taking, as a measuring rod, the figure of 50% of Soviet ICBMs in inventory as being on launcher, although this percentage was not specifically stated in last year's estimate. Our new estimate concludes that the number of missiles that the Soviets would have on launchers would be between 70% and 80% of the numbers in operational inventory.

Third, this year we have changed our estimate of the performance characteristics of the Soviet ICBM. The new estimate gives reliability figures which had not appeared in the old estimate, increases the probable size of warhead, and also judges that the CEP of the ICBM under operational conditions would be about three miles at IOC as against 5 miles in the old estimate, though Army intelligence has recently advised us that they prefer a bracket of 3 to 5 miles.

Fourth, in the new estimate we have for the first time made a careful, and what we consider to be a reasonable analysis of how the Soviets might view their requirements for ICBMs. For example, we believe that the Soviets must anticipate that after about 1961 U. S. hardened sites, Minuteman, Polaris, and improving warning and alert capability would develop. The consequence of this development will be that each additional Soviet ICBM will bring a diminishing return. It takes far more missiles of the performance characteristics we estimate to assure a given result against a hardened target than against a soft one.

Although it is not discussed in our estimates because of the lack of evidence, one factor that one must take into account as regards the future is that there is a point where the Soviets will probably wish to begin to substitute for the liquid-fueled first generation ICBM a less bulky and more flexible missile, possibly with new type propellants.

I now come to the matter of numbers of Soviet ICBMs. Here are the numerical differences between the December 1958 estimate and the 1960 estimate.

The old estimate, as described to you on 4 February 1959, stated our belief that the Soviets could achieve an operational capability of 500 ICBMs within three years after first operational capability (or within two years on the basis of a "crash" program) and 100 ICBMs within a year and a half (or within a year on a crash basis). The old estimate did not give any figures for other dates, and the numbers it gave were for operational capability and not numbers on launchers. In fact, in the 1958 estimate no numbers were given for missiles on launchers.

In the new estimate, on the basis of improved intelligence and more extensive analysis we deal not primarily with capabilities, but with probable Soviet programming. We start with an initial operational capability, estimated to come by 1 January 1960. This is with series produced missiles rather than with the prototype missiles with which we had previously estimated that the Soviet would probably achieve its IOC sometime in 1959.

Then we estimated the Soviet program for future years.

Compared to the figures of 100 and 500 we had given in the old estimate, our new figures for operational inventories are on the average slightly lower in the 1960 estimate than in the December 1958

estimate. ~~The new figures are considerably lower, in the new estimate,~~ *These*

compares the new figures in operational inventory with
~~If one takes into account the possibility envisaged in the old estimate,~~
on the hypothesis

~~but now discarded,~~ that the Soviet might be engaged in a crash program,
Then the new ones are considerably lower

To summarize: The old estimate concluded that the Soviets

could have in inventory a larger number of missiles than our new estimates indicate they probably will have. The new estimate credits the Soviet ICBM with better performance and larger warhead than the old, but eliminates the "crash" feature of the old estimate.

We have also taken into account this year the importance of missiles on launcher, i. e., salvo capability, as the measure of the Soviet striking capability and as the major pace-setter in Soviet programming. Missiles on launcher include the building of launching facilities, the establishment of units, training of personnel, and providing of logistic support as well as the production of missiles.

~~TOP SECRET~~

In addition, we take into account not only the available evidence regarding the Soviet ICBM program itself, but also the evidence relating to other Soviet programs and to Soviet military and political doctrine.

In the context of overall Soviet military programming, ICBMs have a high, but not an absolutely overriding priority. There is much hard evidence that high priority is also accorded to air defense systems. At the same time that Khrushchev pursues these and many other military programs, he shows keen interest in the success of his Seven Year Plan for economic, technological and social development, including education, housing, and the like. He is determined to overfulfill this Plan despite all such obstacles, including importantly, labor shortages.

(submarines,
) short range
(ballistic
) and air to
(surface
) missiles,
(atomic
) weapons,
(military
) electronics

~~TOP SECRET~~

We continue to believe that Khrushchev is not building toward an attack on us at any specific date, but rather that he hopes to dominate the world without a nuclear holocaust. He expects to demonstrate the superiority of the Soviet system, in which he genuinely believes, as well as its ability to achieve economic and technological, as well as military development. He certainly sees great political and military advantages in being able to boast of his missile might. He sees this as a force for a preemptive strike if necessary, and as a substantial deterrent to any who might threaten the Soviet position in any part of the world. He also sees this, together with his air defense, as an umbrella under which he feels his global policy can securely operate.

All members of the USIB agree that the present Soviet ICBM program will probably provide on the order of 35 ICBMs on launcher in mid-1960 and 140-200 ICBMs on launcher in mid-1961. An ICBM program of this magnitude would constitute a formidable and a growing threat to this country.

There is a great degree of uncertainty regarding the Soviet ICBM program beyond mid-'61. The majority estimates of 250-350 ICBM's on launcher in mid-1962, and 350-450 in mid-1963 are brackets indicating the general magnitude of the likely Soviet program in that period as we now see it. The present estimate forecasts the greatest Soviet push in the early part of the program, to achieve a substantial early capability. The Air Force intelligence projects higher figures for 1962 and 1963 than given above.

But all members of the USIB agree that the Soviet program will be subject to changing military, technological, and political developments and that our estimates must be constantly reviewed.